

Films Division
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Raagotsav II to pay tribute to Pt Jasraj and other Masters of music

Mumbai: The concluding part of '*RAAGOTSAV...Celebration of Monsoon*', an online festival of rare Films Division documentaries on Indian classical music is dedicated to the memory of Pt Jasraj, the doyen of Hindustani Music who departed on 17th August, 2020, and also to other maestros of vocal tradition of Indian classical music – both Hindustani and Carnatic schools. '*RAAGOTSAV-II*' will be streamed on FD Website and You Tube channel from 26th to 28th Aug, 2020. The festival offers a veritable musical journey through the life and works of prominent masters of famous gharanas and traditions of Indian Classical music - their performing styles and profound impact and valuable contribution to the vocal classical music. The package also includes well-researched documentaries on the nuances of classical music and its distinct styles and traditions.

'*RAAGOTSAV-II*' will begin with '**Sangeet Martand - Pt. Jasraj**' (50 min./2000/Madhura Jasraj). Among the prominent vocalists of Mewati gharana and follower of egalitarian philosophy, Pt Jasraj introduced a perfect blend of devotional music with traditional classical style. To understand his total submission to God and Music and to understand his thought process behind introducing new format of jugalbandi, watch the biopic, *Jasrangi* first on the slot on 26th August.

Without mentioning Khayal gayaki, recognition of classical music will be incomplete. The documentary '**Khayal**' (78 min./1988/Usha Deshpande) helps us to understand the characteristics of various gharanas or schools such as the Jaipur, Gwalior, Mewati and Kirana gharana and contributions made by their leading exponents to Khayal Gayaki.

Film '**Amir Khan**' (18 min./1970/SNS Sastri) portrays the life and works of Ustad Amir Khan, founder of the Indore Gharana, known for his intellectual approach to music and one of the greatly admired vocalists of his times who could bring out all the emotive aspects of the raagas.

'**M S Subbulakshmi**' (117 min./2000/Rajgopal V) is a comprehensive biopic on Bharat Ratna, M S Subbulakshmi and depicts her illustrious journey and immense contribution to the ancient and glorious tradition of Carnatic music, especially her bhajans with extra ordinary bhakti bhavana that moved great personalities including Mahatma Gandhi to tears.

Second day of the musical feast begins with a documentary on Bharat Ratna Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, great Hindustani exponent of the Kirana gharana and an expert in khayal gayaki. '**Pt. Bhimsen Joshi**' (74 min./1992/Gulzar) is a biographical film that takes us to the maestro's enthralling concerts, analyses his passion for different ragas and attempts to uncover the man behind the music icon.

Known as the 'Pitamaha' (the grand sire) of modern Carnatic Music, a veteran Carnatic musician and teacher, Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer was a dedicated artist. '**Semmangudi Sreenivasa Iyer**' (20 min./2000/Sivan) is a brief biopic on artist's extraordinary skill of producing soulful music in a traditional temperament.

Documentary '**Girija Devi**' (60 min./1997/ Bijoy Chatterjee) peeps into the life and works of an eminent classical singer, an exponent of the Seniya and Banaras Gharanas. She was credited with elevating the profile of Thumri Gayaki and her repertoire included the semi-classical genres like kajri, chaiti, hori and many more.

Another exponent of Kirana Gharana and known for her deep and powerful voice, Gangubai Hangal was a disciple of great maestro Sawai Gandharwa. This film '**Gangubai Hangal**' (31 min./1985/Vijaya Mulay) includes interview with her and also highlights her passion of khayal singing and philosophy behind it.

'**Dhrupad**'(68 min./1982/Mani Kaul) as the name suggests is on 'Dhrupad Raag'. Though it is improvised in its existing form, roots of Dhrupad can be traced back to a thousand years of living traditions. This film helps us to understand the nuances as well as reasons for the popularity of Dhrupad among music lovers.

The world of classical music has a special affection for Tarana bandish. Through '**Tarana**' (26 min./1995/Rajat Kapoor), one gets to know the characteristics of this popular bandish and a unique style that employs mnemonic syllables like 'dar-dar or 'dir-dir' in its compositions. 'Khayalnuma' is a variant of the Tarana that is also presented in this film.

Known for breaking all conventional modes of biographical or documentary film making, '**Siddheswari**' (92 min./1989/Mani Kaul) is a work of experimentation, dedicated to the life and musical journey of legendary Hindustani singer, Siddheswari Devi. This film underlines her invaluable contribution to the world of light classical music.

'**Hans Akela**' (81 min./2006/Jabbar Patel) is the search of a grandson into his grandfather's life and works. Bhuvanesh Komkali takes us back for a retrospective look into his grandfather, Kumar Gandharva's probe of musical roots. His search of Kumar Gandharva is not just as a singing legend but as a musicologist too.

'**The Melody Man –Dr. Balamurali Krishna**' (28min./1999/Gul Bahar Singh) takes a short yet incisive trip into the life and works of one of the great exponents of Carnatic Music - Dr. Balamurali Krishna, a vocalist, multi-instrumentalist, playback singer, composer and character actor. His constant quest for new frontiers and his boundless creativity are perfectly portrayed through the documentary.

Raagotsav attempts to not only showcase the best classical music talents India has produced over centuries but also to rekindle and re-invent the spirit of pure music for 'rasikas' in India and across the globe. The festival also aims at introducing the younger generation of music lovers to the treasure trove of great traditions of music India is known for, from North to South and East to West. Please visit www.filmdivision.org and click @ "Documentary of the Week" or follow FD YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/user/FilmsDivision> to enjoy the veritable music feast.

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